

REMARKS

Claims 7, 13, 16, 18 and 19 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found in the Specification at least at page 5, lines 1-12 and at page 12, line 22 *et seq.* No new matter has been added and entry is respectfully requested. Claims 1 and 17 were previously canceled. Claims 2-16, 18 and 19 are currently pending.

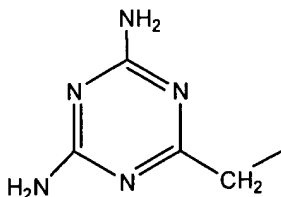
Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 10-12.

Claim 13 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. JP-09-236923 to Nakano et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Nakano"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Official Action, Nakano discloses a composition as set forth in Claim 13 wherein the alkali solubility controller of formula (1) is 1-benzyl-2-ethylimidazole (page 2 of the Official Action). This compound meets the limitations of formula (1) of Claim 13 only when R⁴ in the formula is an ethyl group which, according to the Official Action, is an "alkyl substituted methyl group". Claim 13 has been amended to recite that R⁴ in the formula (1) can be a *substituted* alkyl group having 2-20 carbon atoms. It is respectfully submitted that an ethyl group does not meet this definition. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 13 is not anticipated by Nakano. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 7-9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 01-197520 (hereinafter referred to as "the '520 publication"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Official Action, the '520 publication discloses a composition as set forth in Claim 7 wherein the compound of formula (1) wherein R^4 is either methyl or ethyl, R_5 is either a hydrogen atom or a methyl group, and R^2 is the following group:



This group only meets the definition of formula (1) of Claim 7 when R_2 is a *substituted* alkyl group (i.e., a substituted methyl group). Claim 7 has been amended to recite that R^2 can be an *unsubstituted* alkyl group having 1-20 carbon atoms. Claim 7 is therefore not anticipated by the '520 publication. Claims 8 and 9 depend from Claim 7 and are therefore also not anticipated by the '520 publication for at least the reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 3-5, 7-9, 14-16 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0054287A1 to Yasunami et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Yasunami"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Official Action, Yasunami discloses compositions as set forth in independent Claims 7, 16 and 18 which comprise the compound of the formula (1) is N-methylimidazole. N-methylimidazole, however, only meets the limitations of formula (1) when each of the R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^5 , and R^6 groups is a hydrogen atom. Each of Claims 7, 16 and 18, however, has been amended to recite that at least one of the R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^5 , and R^6 groups is not a hydrogen atom. Claims 7, 16 and 18 are therefore patentable

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over Yasunami. Claims 3-5, 8, 9, 14 and 15 depend from either of Claims 7, 16 and 18 and are therefore also patentable over Yasunami for at least the reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 16 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0041769 A1 to Iwasawa et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Iwasawa") in view of Yasunami. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Official Action, Iwasawa discloses compositions as set forth in independent Claim 16 wherein the compound of the formula (1) is 4-methylimidazole which, according to the Official Action, is "equivalent to N-methylimidazole, as evidenced by Yasunami". N-methylimidazole, however, only meets the limitations of formula (1) of Claim 16 when each of the R¹, R², R³, R⁴, R⁵, and R⁶ groups is a hydrogen atom. Claim 16, however, has been amended to recite that at least one of the R¹, R², R³, R⁴, R⁵, and R⁶ groups is not a hydrogen atom. Claim 16 is therefore patentable over Iwasawa. Claim 6 depends from Claim 16 and is therefore also patentable over Iwasawa for at least the reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 19 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0039916 A1 to Adegawa et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Adegawa"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Official Action, Adegawa discloses compositions as set forth in Claim 19 wherein the compound of the formula (1) is N-methylimidazole. As acknowledged in the Official Action, however, N-methylimidazole only meets the

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limitations of formula (1) of Claim 19 when each of the R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^5 , and R^6 groups is a hydrogen atom. Claim 19, however, has been amended to recite that at least one of the R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^5 , and R^6 groups is not a hydrogen atom. Claim 19 is therefore patentable over Adegawa. Claim 2 depends from Claim 19 and is therefore also patentable over Adegawa for at least the reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.



Christopher W. Raimund
Registration No. 47,258

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Date

P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
Telephone No. (202) 326-0300
Facsimile No. (202) 326-0778

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